1: Kruger M-5 (ca. 1930)1936 FX14 Lovedu FX14

THE LOVEDU

1. The Lovedu-tribe took its origin in Mashonaland. Therefore, when a Lovedu salutes, they say :" In truth, Lovedu, in truth Khalaga,[1] person of Ledaža,[2] person who comes from Mashonaland ! " Furthermore they are " the Pigs of Mohale. "[3]—They say there is the home of the Lovedu.[4]

2. They say the king there had two sons. Now one of them[5] was given the rain.[6] Afterwards the elder brother desired the thing of the younger one. He went to ask his younger brother for the rain. But the younger brother refused to give him the rain. The elder brother rose against him with spears.[7] The younger brother escaped southward,[8] he crossed the Limpopo-river of Mashonaland. On the way they separated into two groups. One tended towards the South and settled at Vyaḏadi[9] namely the Mamabolo-tribe. They are also " Pigs[10] of Maḏaži."[11]

3. Now the Lovedu were looking for a nice country with fertile soil and with ant-hills.[12] They sent the young men in advance to look out for such a country. And indeed—when these passed Vendaland they found the right country having merula-trees and ant-hills in the east of the mountain where there is established " Medingen "[13] to-day—namely at Khumelo.[14]

4. They found that there was living another tribe called that of Kheoga.[15] Those people did not know the fire. They ate all their food unboiled. They ate it just like the wild animals.

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[1] Name for the inhabitants of Mashonaland.

[2] See later the praise-names of the kings.

[3] Name of chief.

[4] I was given the following explanation of the word " Lovedu ": *Volovelu khê khho khe fhedolwa ge khore : mo khho lovahho zwilô, e lêkho vathu le ḽikhomu le riṅgu.*—Lovedu means : there where things namely persons, cattle, goats and sheep are being brought as offerings.

[5] The younger one.

[6] The instruments and formulae to prepare the rain-medicine.

[7] Chief weapon.

[8] Literally : upwards.

[9] Mountains near Haenertsburg.

[10] Lovedu and Mamabolo praise the same animal : the wild pig.

[11] See later the praise-names of the kings.

[12] Ants = a delicacy.

[13] Mission Station.

[14] Name of mountain.

[15] Another Bantu-tribe.

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5. The Lovedu asked them how they managed to live without fire. The Kheoga said: "What is fire? what does it do?" The Lovedu said: "We warm ourselves by the fire and cook the food with it." Then they gave them cooked food. When they had eaten they found that it tasted sweet. So they asked the Lovedu for fire. They wanted to cook with it and to warm themselves. When it went out they returned again to ask for fire. Then they began to work with it. 173

6. Now the Lovedu desired the country and its wealth. They wanted to take possession of it. But they were unable (to do so), as they found that it had its possessors. So they planned to fight and to drive the Kheoga out of the country. 173 726

7. Now they thought that their weapons could be the fire. So they ordered the young men to seize fire-brands. They surrounded the villages of the Kheoga to set fire to the country that the fire might burn the villages together with the people. The young men did so. The fire burnt everywhere and laid the villages in ashes. The Kheoga were in great distress. They left their villages and fled. But there was no spot for them to get away, for the fire surrounded the whole country.

8. Some ascended the hills, they were protected by the large rocks, where the fire could not come. Others climbed upon trees. These burnt altogether, for the grass was very tall, for it had not been burned since the beginning. Many people died a terrible death. Only very few escaped. Even to-day these people have not yet become a tribe again. Their kin has not yet increased similar to others.[16]

9. So the country became property of the Lovedu until to-day. The Lovedu gained their country by fighting for it with fire. 173 773

10. Furthermore they say that on their journey from Mashonaland the Lovedu were in great troubles, when they found a dried-up country —a country without water. The large rivers were far from them. They were looking for much water and did not find it. It is said that their chief chose young men to look for water for the tribe. He himself went with them. They were searching but they missed it.

11. They say that the chief had taken with him the calabash which his father had given him to produce rain. So he tried to make the rain fall where they were. After a little while there fell a heavy rain and filled all the rivers and watercourses. When they returned to their shelters, they arrived wet to the skin. The people got water for drinking and cook-

[16] They have inter-married with the Lovedu and other tribes.

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ing. It is said that this was the first miracle of that chief, for in Mashonaland his brother had produced the rainfall.

12. The name of the first chief who left Mashonaland is Magaphele. It was he who took possession of the country of Kheoga by fighting with fire. The second chief is Mohale. There is not much known about him.

13. The third chief is "Kheale kha Mmamohhale a Leḍaža."[17] This is his praise-name. He produced rainfall just like his fore-fathers.

14. The fourth chief is "Phedola-Khefhedola-Maru-a—ḍaža."[18] This is his praise-name. They praise them on account of the clouds, they say: "They transform the clouds so that the rain must fall."

15. He—Phedola—had a son who was the first-born[19] When the king was about to die, he gave the younger son the rain-horn. But the people did not know that the chief had given him the horn of chieftainship. They thought that they would find that he who had the great name of chieftainship[20] would be he who had received the rain-horn. The name of the eldest son was "Maḍaže" (the Filler) that of the younger one was Makhoba (the Finisher). Therefore they said: "Chief is Maḍaže! He will fill the rivers with rain-water. As to Makhoba that means he will empty the rivers, so that we shall have no water." Therefore they proclaimed Maḍaže their chief.

16. They drove the younger brother away so that he had to leave the Lovedu-country. He left together with the troop which trusted in him. He went upwards and came to "Nareni"[21] and settled on the mountain of Khevela.[22]

17. Now in Loveduland Maḍaže was not able to produce rainfall. That country was a country of sunshine and hunger without intermission. There at Khevela rain was falling continuously every year; it was a country of corn, for the rain was falling.

18. Then the head-men of Loveduland began to cry and to complain that they did not know that it was Makhoba who had been given the rain-

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[17] Unknown names

[18] "Transformer—clouds are filled."

[19] —and therefore heir to the Crown according to the law.

[20] See [19]

[21] "At the Buffalo" name of the country in the South of Loveduland from the name of the tribes living there. They praise the buffalo.

[22] Near the confluence of the Selati-and Olifant-river.

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horn. And they planned to call him to return home and to become chief. So they sent some of them to ask him to return to Loveduland, to come and to be chief.

19. He refused and said: "You have driven me away, I can never return." Then they urged him. But he said: "How can I go? My elder brother will kill me." They said: "We shall make plans to drive him away." Then he agreed and left with them. When they came to "Nareni ha Lezwalô "[23] they left him there.

20. They however—for they wanted to hide the facts to chief Maḍaže—when they arrived in the village of Loveduland, went to the chief and said: "Know! your brother Mákhoba left with warriors, he wants to kill you, he is on the road, he is coming! Flee! Go away that he may not find you." Chief Maḍaže said: "How can I go away? The young men will fight for me, I shall defeat them." They however pressed him. They said: "He comes with many spears, we shall fail. Go away, Chief, hide yourself, that, when we are fighting with them, even if they beat us, they cannot kill you." But the chief refused.

21. Then some of the head-men went back, they called chief Makhoba that he might approach. When he was near, they returned again to chief Maḍaže and informed him that he was coming to-day, that he was near: "Go away, hide yourself that, when we are fighting with them, they may not kill you." Then chief Maḍaže agreed. He left his village and abode in a thicket. During the night chief Makhoba entered the village. The head-men went to tell their chief: "Your younger brother entered the village with an army. He will seek you with rage, rise! we shall lead you away thither to the mountain of Levaga.[24]

22. Then the chief moved off and went to that mountain. On the road to go to Levaga there was a river called Moḍazwi.[25] It was not allowed for the chiefs to cross that river. Whenever a chief crossed it, he was no longer able to rule over the tribe. He will be ruined by crossing that river. Now it happened when he just had crossed, that they said: "Know! as you have crossed the river which may not be crossed by the chief, you cannot be our chief anymore.

23. They left him there and went home; they were governed by chief Makhoba. They gave him the name of his ancestor "Phedola-

[23] A "buffalo"-tribe living near the Letaba-river.
[24] In the North of Loveduland.
[25] In the North of Loveduland.

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Khefhedola-Maru-a-ɗaža." He ruled the country, he made the rain fall like his father. The people loved him much on account of the rain. 173

24. Towards the end of his rule he had a son. This son—he made him live just as an orphan, he hated him and treated him as a thief. He did so especially for the reason that the people should not perceive that the chief wanted to give him his chieftainship. That child had a house erected far from the village, he dwelt there. When he wanted to go home, he did not enter by the main-entrance. His father had made a small path for him unknown to every body; furthermore when the child happened to come amidst other people on that road, the chief prevented him from entering. The name of that child was "Mogôdô, the cast-out, Mogôdô the neck with fat-wrinkles, or the resting-place for property and men,[26] or Mogôdô-Mme-a Phedola-Khefhedola-Maru-a-ɗaža."

25. These praises were widely spread during his chieftainship. He was a powerful chief of severe government, for he used to kill people. He killed sorcerers and adulterers and people who were found telling lies, When judging he liked to pass sentences of death. Some were strangled. others were ordered to be burdened with stones and drowned in a deep place in the river.

26. Furthermore Mogôdô was a clever man in his undertakings. That what still to-day is to be seen of his clever undertakings is the stone-work which he erected with great skill. In the country there are no buildings which are similar to his. Among these buildings there is to be found a stone-seat which is beautifully carved. It was the seat of chief Mogôdô, when he was basking in the sun. It surprises really, it was hewn out with great skill. On that place there was the chief-kraal, its name is Levyeni.[27] (Others say that those buildings have been erected by Kheale, the ancestor of Mogôdô). 173 643 324

27. In the days of chief Mogôdô two of his head-men quarrelled about their territories. Therefore the chief sent his young men to stop the quarrel; they however found that war had broken out. So they returned home to inform the chief. Now the chief set out himself. When he arrived at the mountain of Mmanopi[28] he divided his army into two divisions to surround the villages of those head-men. When they saw that the chief had come to fight with them they were afraid that they would be killed. So they submitted to their lord. They offered two 173 643

[26] Property and men have space in the wrinkles of his neck.
[27] "At the rock."
[28] In the East.

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girls and asked that the chief might pardon them this trespass. Then the chief sounded the horn to assemble his troups. When the troups had assembled on one place, they were told that it was finished. Now the chief seized his war-horn, blew it and jumped about. All the troups intonated praise-songs to praise the chief; they said: "Mogôdô, the neck with fat-wrinkles, Mogôdô, he rules with the rain-horn." It is 'Mogôdô-Mme-a—Phedola," he says: 'I kill a person'—he kills; he says; 'I make live'—he makes live."

28. Then the chief took his spear, danced, pushed it into the ground and pointed to the East. He said to his warriors: "From the East there are coming black ants. You will fight with them, and you will defeat them." Then he pushed down again, pointed to the West and said: "From the West there will come red ants, these will defeat you over and over again."[29]

29. Chief Mogôdô fought also with Khašane, the son of his father. But Khašane fled into the country called Tshale.[30] Then the people called him to come and stay in another country called Moduveni,[31] where a certain man namely Mamadêba, a son of Khašane grew up, who found the Word of God at Port Elizabeth, who was found fighting against the darkness in the days of Rev. Knothe and Reuter.[32] He was killed by the second female chief Masalanavô for the sake of the Gospel.

30. Mogôdô had two sons. When they quarrelled about the chieftainship of their father, the chieftainship was given his daughter who became the first female chief Možaži. The brothers were driven out of the country by the magic power of the little calabash[33] and the fire-stick[34] which had been strengthened with medicines of driving people out of the country.

31. So Možaži became chief, she was a good ruler over the country Lovedu like her father. She also killed the wrong-doers namely the socerers and thieves and liars. She produced rainfall like her father, she received homages of chiefs who came from far with treasures of different kinds and elephant-tusks—coming from Zululand, Sekhukhuni, Ramabulana[35] and *Ngungunyane*.[36]

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[29] A prophecy attributed also to the chief Sekhukhuni.
[30] In the West.
[31] In the West.
[32] Missionaries among the *Golové*.
[33] The holy vessels of the tribe.
[34] The holy vessels of the tribe.
[35] In Vendaland.
[36] In Thongaland.

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32. Therefore the praise-song of chief Možaži says: "Možaži—when the sun sets—trader in the hut;[37] I sleep on the road,[38] I am a widow,[39] I have no one who watches me. I am the elephant-knife on the hip in the sheath;[40] she eats meat,[41] the trader in the house."

33. The second chief was Masala-Navô. She was given this name by the dead (queen), when she was raised to the throne. She governed also like the other chiefs. Her praise-song says: "Mmasala-Navô,[42] speak good (words). When you are speaking bad (words), the tribe will split. It was the chief Khethubudi of Mashonaland who said: "I do not like the people.—Finally I got an ulcer on my back and said: 'People, scratch me.'"[43]—The hawk, at which they look with fear, they look at me with hearts full of hatred."[44]

34. This queen had milk-cows. They were called "the selected" of the chief-kraal. They were milked by a head-man who had been chosen to milk them. When they were milked, and the carrier of the milk was carrying it to bring it home—when it happened that he met people, they had to kneel down until he had passed. This was a custom to honour the food of the chief. When a person was standing when the milk passed near him, it was a great crime. These cows were not kept in one kraal together with the cattle of the village, but they remained separated.

35. Furthermore chief Mmasala-Navô hated the believers (in Christ). A Christian was not allowed to enter the chief's kraal. When a Christian had a case to be settled in the chief's Court, he had to sit outside the village under a tree; he sent his words through the messenger of the chief.

36. Chief Khesêthwane who governs to-day, and who is also called Možaži, is the third female chief. She produces rainfall. She allows the Christians to enter the official meeting-place and her village. She is fond of education. A church has been built near the meeting-place of

[37] It is not necessary that she goes round to "sell" the rain. People are coming to her to buy in her hut.

[38] Like a prostitute (?)—she was not married but is said to have had many lovers.

[39] Because she had no husband.

[40] Praise of her blood-thirstiness.

[41] She killed her chief counsellor always after a short service.

[42] "She who remains with them."

[43] That chief thought that he was able to live without needing other people, until he became ill and was unable to help himself. Then he was obliged to call for assistance.

[44] Praise of the cruelty of the Queen.

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the royal kraal. The children of the chief's kraal are attending school at her command.

37. Chief Khesêthwane does not allow that a person enters her kraal with shoes on his feet. When somebody approaches the main entrance, he must take off the shoes and leave them outside the main-entrance that he may be allowed to enter the meeting-place.

The beginning of the government of female chiefs in Loveduland

1. The last male chief is Mogôdô. He had two sons: Malegudu and Kheêbe. These young men quarrelled about the chieftainship of their father when he was still alive. Now they had a sister who was called Možaži. So the chieftainship was given her that she might be the ruler of the tribe. The brothers were driven away.

2. When a person is made chief in Loveduland, he must be given the fire-stick and the water-calabash. Now they gave the sister the fire-stick and the calabash that she might bring it to Malegudu, the elder brother. But it is said that they had been strengthened by magic charms which make a person mad who looks at them with his eyes. He will behave like a mad person, he will leave his home, go away and move to another country and dwell there.

3. They say when Malegudu had looked at the fire-stick and the calabash, he left the land of his father, went to Vendaland and died there. Kheêbe the younger son who had quarrelled with him about the chieftainship was treated in the same way as the elder one. He left the country went to Thôvôlô[45] and died there.

4. So the chieftainship was given the daughter of Mogôdô namely Možaži I. She had a daughter called Masala-Navô. She followed her mother in the chieftainship.

5. Masala-Navô had no child until her old age. But she had a younger sister. She had two children. The first child was a boy, the second one a girl. The girl-child called Khesêthwane was chosen to be chief. She is Možaži who governs still to-day.

[45] In Portuguese-East-Africa.

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even the royal constellation of institutions, curious and incongruous with modern conditions though they might be.

And it is to a brief history of the royal institutions, as providing the key to an understanding of the Lovedu, that we shall now proceed. But let us say this: truth is ever stranger than fiction, yet it is also more complex and elusive. The truth that obtains in a strange world, made up of beliefs and values very different from our own, is not easy to recapture; there is no basis, no framework, in our lives for it. We are continuously confounded by inconsistencies and paradoxes, try as we would to turn our conceptions and theories this way and that and even upside down to fit the facts into them. What we shall try to do is to give a visual representation of a few historical events, by way of a series of pageants passing in review. A complete account of the background of the past is far beyond our purpose. It will be sufficient to represent the spirit of these events, leaving for another occasion the question of how far they have a true basis in fact.

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The pageants are not arranged into groups by the tribal historian, but we may present them as if they were colossal cycles, the cycle of the kings and the cycle of the queens. Each cycle opens in mystery, the mystery of an incestuous conception that, instead of corrupting the world, crowns the sinner; it is the ritual vindication of revolutionary change. In the first cycle, which starts just before 1600 and ends two centuries later, the change signalizes the birth of the tribe; then follow wanderings and the settlement of an infant community, which slowly develops to the splendid stature of manhood; and, finally, corruption and dissensions lead to a downfall. But in the midst of the ruins of the catastrophic civil war, which ends the first cycle, a new conception is born and we are at the beginning of the second cycle. The first cycle is handled with simple power; but no single doctrine in it runs its full course. Yet it cannot be mere coincidence that the mystery which marks the birth of the tribe should also be invoked to account for the momentous change from kings to queens.

The cycle of the queens has not yet been completed; it began about 1800 and rapidly ran to the height of its splendour; and its crisis, prematurely brought to a head, has also been indefinitely lengthened by the intervention of a new order of things, ushered in by the advent of the European. We cannot predict when the crisis will end or what the outcome of so prolonged a suspense will be, for the response to the challenge of this new order is now only taking shape and direction. But of this we can be certain, that in a world ordained by the white man there is less room for the vast sweep of the legendary mysteries. The tribal historian is unequal to the task of harmonizing the play of new, intractable forces with the theme of his exalted design.

The history of Lovedu kings and queens is not unlike the legends of the saints. The tribal historian is, of course, not troubled by a sacred theme, by the eternal struggle between Good and Evil; but he must justify historical events, he must bring them into relation with the grand purposes of the tribe. He never consciously tampers with essential facts; he uncritically accepts tradition that has been handed down to him.

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There is no direct falsification, but the way in which all distinctions of place and time are ignored leads to strange distortions. The tribal historian pictures man and events, not in the shape of their setting in the past, but in the colours of the values of the present. This involves inevitable selection and rearrangement. Again, legend without dramatic appeal is liable to be lost in oblivion; and so the historian, telling his story by the fireside, must be a dramatist. He groups his material, centres them upon important events and colours them to harmonize with the total picture of the society he has in mind. It is not always easy to reproduce either the whole picture or that touch here and those lines there, which give it its distinctive character and meaning. There are delineations of what in the society are regarded as we regard original sin, but they effect the salvation, not the damnation of man. A treacherous deed assumes the form of a glorious achievement. A usurper is turned into a hero. Royal incest, instead of threatening the security of the society, strengthens the divine right to rule. These are some of the critical moments in the history of Lovedu kings and queens that we wish to present by a series of pageants.

THE CYCLE OF THE KINGS

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The First Pageant (*c.* 1500). The sons of Monomotapa, mighty monarch of the Uakaranga, quarrel and each sets himself up as an independent *mambo*, or chief, dividing Uukhalaga, the empire of their father, among themselves. One of these chiefs has his capital at the mountain of Maulwi, somewhere in Rhodesia. His people, prostrating themselves in his presence, call him *mulozwi* or *murozwi*, but he has merely taken that name as a praise title to mark the link between him and the king of the Rozwi. Perhaps it is only a political link, not implying kinship of any kind. We do not know. Mambo rules his people, not by force, but through his supernatural prerogatives, for he is a sacred king. Tradition dictates that he should end his reign by ritual suicide. He is appointed, not in accordance with man-made rules, but by the spirit of his predecessor, who holds the door of the hut in which he died against all but the true heir; and it is only through that doorway that his successor can ascend the throne.

This *mambo* has a daughter, Dzugudini, and, though she is unmarried, she has an infant son, Makaphimo. Mambo wishes to punish the seducer of his daughter, but Dzugudini and her mother refuse to disclose the identity of the culprit, saying, 'The father of the child of a king's daughter is not to be known.' Mambo becomes more and more suspicious. Dzugudini's mother steals the rain charms and the sacred beads, and feverishly teaches her daughter their virtues and their use; and before Mambo can take action, Dzugudini and her infant son flee to the south.

After a long and eventful journey, the fugitives, accompanied by a handful of followers, arrive in Uulovedu, where they settle and found the tribe of the Lovedu. We do not know whether Mambo ever discovered who had seduced his daughter; but Lovedu tradition records that Makaphimo was the issue of the incestuous union of uterine brother

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173 and sister. The brother remains as *mambo*, successor to his father; the 643 sister, Dzugudini, by virtue of her incest, justifies the creation of a new people.

The Second Pageant (*c.* 1650). Both Dzugudini and Makaphimo have died, the first in Nareni, the second at Khumeloni. One of the nobles, remaining on the highveld, is moving southwards from near Munnik, later to establish the chiefdom of Mamaoolo; two brothers of Makaphimo tarry on the way down the escarpment, and we see the one, Mahasha, sowing his seeds (*hu hasha*) to test the agricultural possibilities, the other, Mudiga, struggling to drive off the lions which surround (*hu diga*) his settlement. Muhale, son of Makaphimo, is ruling at Khumeloni. He is the acknowledged founder of the greatness of the Lovedu during the cycle. He successfully appeals to Mahasha and Mudiga to rejoin him; they give him their daughters as wives and he makes them his great headmen.

But Muhale's reign stands out boldly because of his subjugation of the Khɔga, primitive denizens of the forest of Daja. They have no fire, and live like wild animals, eating raw meat; their huts are badly constructed and dirty; they till the soil with sharpened sticks instead of hoes; and they have neither chief nor any visible form of government. The fair-skinned, cultured Lovedu set about educating these Calibans of savage humanity, teaching them the uses of fire. The Khɔga find a new contentment in the sweetness of cooked food and in warming themselves by the hearth fires. Savage pupil and cultured tutor become close friends, so close that the savage unsuspectingly shows his benefactor the qualities of 'the place of the gods' (*vadimoni*) in the forest at Daja. They envisage a brave new world, but they do not know that they are being deceived For in reality the Lovedu, coveting 'the place of the gods', are planning their destruction, They do not disclose the knowledge that fire can burn the veld; for they intend that 'their spears shall be fire'. And presently they set the grass alight and the fire scatters some Khɔga, but burns most of them to death.

A moment later we see the Lovedu praying at the shrines at Daja. When Muhale dies they bury him there; the Lovedu no longer fear the ancestral spirits of the Khɔga. (For the fire, we may suppose, is here, as in the great transition ceremonies, a sacred rite. It effects the transition from danger to safety, from defilement to sanctity; the power for evil of foreign spirits it converts to a power for good in the service of the usurper; it cleanses the alien past and welds it firmly into the present.) As the pageant passes we see the ruins of another strange people, the Dgɔna. The Lovedu dread these ruins; they build far from them; avenging spirits, who have never been assimilated, contaminate the soil; the fire which purified and aggregated the sacred places of the Khɔga was not used against them.

The Third Pageant (*c.* 1700). At Daja, beside the grave of Muhale, we see another, that of Malaji. 'He who makes the country sleep', for that is what his name means, has left behind him peace and plenty. The

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little colony, sheltered in the fastnesses of its seclusion, is busy working out its salvation. The Lovedu have ample living space, for the lowveld is still almost devoid of inhabitants. Beyond it there are great nations, kept at a distance by geographical obstacles. The Lovedu are not only secure in their mountain fastnesses, but also protected by those far-off barriers—the massive mountains towering over the Olifants River in the south, stretching forth a gigantic limb to the north, and the deep, tsetse-fly infested Limpopo Valley circling the west as a moat defensive of their home.

Men are discussing to whom Malaji has entrusted the rain charms, to Pheduli, 'the Drainer of the Rivers,' or to his eldest son, Madaji, whose nickname, 'the Filler of the Rivers,' is much more auspicious. Madaji settles their doubts by driving off Pheduli and seizing the throne. But in the sequel we see drought and famine in Vulovedu, while at Khivela, where Pheduli rules, copious rains bring plenteous crops. Year after year Madaji's magic sweeps up gales that scatter the clouds hanging over Daja, whereas Pheduli constrains them to drop their gentle rain at Khivela.

The contrast is especially evident to the headmen living near Tzaneen. They secretly ally themselves with Pheduli; they spread rumours of a mighty army marching upon the capital. At length their strategy succeeds. Madaji flees to the forest, unsuspectingly entrusting his defence to the traitors; and when they report defeat and persuade him to rally his forces in the north, he is trapped into crossing the Madazwi River. It is a river which, even to-day, kings cross at the price of their crown; it drains the source of their power to rule. Madaji thus forfeits his right to the throne, and Pheduli, safely installed, becomes the mighty Transformer of the Clouds.

Faith in the sanctity of a system which may exclude the elder in favour of the younger son is restored; man-made rules, which usurp the function of the spirit presiding over the choice of a successor, are discredited. There is no room in this pageant (nor is there in tradition) for the defection, probably at this time, of a considerable section of the tribe, who later become the people of Mamaila.

The Fourth Pageant (*c.* 1750–1800). Pheduli's grave stands beside those of his forefathers. The scene discloses Khiali, the fair-faced king, reclining in a seat hewn out of the rock on the summit of a mountain amid immense walls of stone. In the spirit in which the scene is portrayed, with its mounds of masonry and its structures of stone, the impression conveyed is one of Zimbabwic splendour. (The ruins are still there, phallic stones projecting from rough stone walls some 8 ft. high, and the sculptured seat is merely two rocks in their natural position. But it is with the spirit, not the reality of the scene that we are concerned.)

Khiali does not notice those faint figures of foreigners crowding into the background. They are the Sotho invaders of the lowveld, pressing over the mountains in the south, clambering down the escarpment in the west, and in far-off Phalaborwa settling in an unfavourable environment, whence some would soon leave to encroach upon Vulovedu. On

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his magnificent material foundations Khiali is concerned to build a strong spiritual edifice. His predecessors were content to entrust the welfare of the divine prince, he who should ascend the throne, to the care of the gods. But he, Khiali, by strengthening the hands of the gods, would secure for ever the succession of the sacred heir.

As Khiali sits there, a youth, obviously concerned to avoid detection, appears in the shadows of an opening in the fence. He slinks away when he sees others beside Khiali in the courtyard. A moment later he reappears, only to be driven back by Khiali, showering curses upon his head. But later we see Khiali and the youth whispering together in the king's private hut; the king is secretly teaching him the use of the rain charms. The youth is Mugɔdɔ the Outcast, youngest son of Khiali His father stints him of everything, makes him dwell far from the capital, treats him like a thief, and refuses him entry into his village except when he comes alone and unobserved by a secret pathway through the undergrowth. These things he does to deceive the people and safeguard Mugɔdɔ's title to the throne. But they also develop a supersensitiveness in the Outcast.

Thwarted in his youth, Mugɔdɔ suffers irreparable damage to his self-respect; he is obsessed by suspicions; he imagines that every man's hand is against him. His councillors are adulterers and sorcerers, corrupting his wives, plotting to usurp his position. Scandal and dissension sap the strength of the kingdom. His elder brother, Khashani, rises against him; he is driven off, but the tribe splits into two; and more than a century later, in the second cycle, a descendant of Khashani challenges Mujaji with a foreign creed. Mugɔdɔ answers his detractors with wholesale executions, but he is concerned to vindicate himself rather than to regain order in the land. In a civil strife between two of his headmen, he makes no move until he feels himself insulted by 'the rusty arrows fit for the rubbish heap' that cause the blood of a kinsman to flow. The crowning catastrophe that embitters his soul is the conduct of his wayward sons. They enter the huts of his younger wives; they slaughter his cattle to gain popularity at their father's expense; they send him the dregs after draining the tributary beer.

And Mugɔdɔ's reign ends in chaos and confusion. Royal kinsmen massacre one another; internecine strife is followed by unparalleled famine; ravenous wild beasts terrorize the villages; Malegudu, one of Mugɔdɔ's sons, gains control for a time, but he has eventually to flee before Mujaji, his sister, and is assassinated in Vendaland; Khiɛbɛ, another son, seeks refuge in Thɔvɔblland, where he dies an unnatural death; Sephumulo, a powerful noble, unable to stomach subjection to Mujaji, who is gaining the ascendancy, severs his allegiance and establishes the twin tribes of Rakwadu and Sekhɔpɔ. And as these disasters befall the tribe, the first cycle completes its course.

THE CYCLE OF THE QUEENS

The Fifth Pageant (*c.* 1800). As the second cycle opens, the disasters which appear to be the Nemesis upon the vice of an uncertain succession

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(for it was Khiali's attempt to readjust the machinery of succession which maladjusted Mugɔdɔ for the task of a king) are reconstructed to form a chain of triumph for Mujaji. The most dramatic moments are not the disasters, but two interconnected events: Mugɔdɔ's prophecy and Mugɔdɔ's sin.

At the end of the civil strife, into which the insult of the rusty arrows goads Mugɔdɔ to throw his decisive weight, he orders the war horns to be sounded; and as he begins a solitary, spectacular dance (*hu pɔbɔla*), his people, prostrating themselves, solemnly intone his praises: 'Mugɔdɔ of the neck-with-great-folds-of-fat, wherein do rest both goods and men, who hurls his challenge with the rain-horn; Mugɔdɔ of Pheduli, Transformer of the Clouds, he kills as he lists and spares whom he likes.' Pointing in the four directions, he raises his voice in prophecy: 'I am going away to creep into the horn of a cow (i.e. to die). I do not like to sleep in the open, vainly counting the stars. I go to unloose the black ants in the east. They will bite you and kill you, but in the end you will overcome them. Thereafter I shall unleash the red ants in the west; you will fight them, but you will fight them in vain. Further, I say this country will be ruled by a frontal skirt.'

It is Mugɔdɔ's farewell message just before he dies. But the prophecy epitomizes the three great moments in the cycle of queens: the accession of a woman, the raids of Dguni hordes (black ants), and the conquest by the European (red ants).

The Sixth Pageant (*c.* 1800). Mugɔdɔ is the instrument of an inexorable fate. His faith in his fellow men, in his councillors, even in his sons, has been shattered. He muses that women also are faithless. But their faith, however unfaithful, keeps them falsely true; they intrigue against him as their husband, but they are loyal to him as their king. Above all, their mystery is allied to a power, not to blast the tribe to fragments, but to subdue men and turn their passions to the service of the state. That is the vision given to Mugɔdɔ, and the guarantee of its divine origin is the far-off past in which Dzugudini originated the tribe. That past also suggests how the vision can be realized. And in the scene before us these mighty issues are handled with a simplicity and a directness which it is impossible to reproduce.

Mugɔdɔ betakes himself to his favourite daughter at Maulwi, sacred reminder of the mountain in Rhodesia. Simply he tells her of his purpose, but she doubts its divine source: 'It cannot be, my father,' she says; 'these things are too difficult.' Mugɔdɔ goes again to her, but she remains mystified that a sin that defiles can be a rite that sanctifies.

Then Mugɔdɔ goes to Lekhwareni, the despised place of stones and of slothful people (for, according to their praise song, they burn their nails roasting the maize that they should have stamped). There lives Mujaji, daughter of his wife, Mamujaji. To her also he confides his vision; he tells her she will be queen if, though celibate, she will bear the heir to the throne. He is not speaking of a virgin birth, for she understands that he, her father, will be the father of her issue. 'You are all-wise, O father,' she replies. 'I am the servant of your will.' A secret hut

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is built; an inquisitive intruder, the favourite wife of Mugɔdɔ, suffers the extreme penalty; and in due course a son, not a daughter, is born.

But Fate tricks Mugɔdɔ in vain. The son is strangled and a little later there is a daughter. She is to become Mujaji II.

The Seventh Pageant (*c.* 1850). Mujaji I has already been on her resplendent throne for half a century; she has turned the chaos of her predecessor's reign to peace and prosperity; and, surrounded by restrictions which forced her into seclusion and fostered the idea of her sagacity and immortality, she has won the fame and attraction which drew so many foreigners to her capital. She is 'the white-faced Mankhadeni, radiant as the setting sun'. 'Huckster in her hut', perched like an eagle's eyrie on the fringe of a forest, she dispenses as she wishes the life-giving rain. 'She casts away some; others she shares with the vultures.'

Hosts of foreign ambassadors and potentates gather at her court. Some bring cattle, others their daughters or sisters; these are the gifts with which they show their homage or supplicate for rain. In the company we see messengers from Manukuza, dread monarch of Gasaland, supplicating with mighty gifts from their master; ambassadors of Zwide, challenger of Chaka himself, seeking to ward off the chastisement of locusts and drought, but smitten to death for his presumption in coming so near Ŭulovedu; and also an envoy from Moshesh in far-off Basutoland. Less pretentious are the men from Malevɔxɔ, whose Lovedu wife had taught him the elements of the magic of rain-making; from Vendaland, where they call Mujaji 'the wife who brings them water to wash their face'; from Phalavorwa, upon whose internal struggles Mujaji arbitrates. From Chopiland and Ŭunyai, from the Ŭirwa and Tswana, from the very ends of the world, there are suppliants. Sekwati, the great Pedi king, is seeking a matrimonial alliance, hence that herd of cattle in the courtyard; Mali of the Khaha and Magaepia of the Letswalo, queens crowned in their own countries in imitation of the immortal Mujaji, come to be strengthened and fitted for their task. But the mightiest tribute of all is the gift from the Zulu king, who, disappointed by the failure of his mission to the great Swazi rain-maker, supplicates the rain-maker of rain-makers.[1]

The pageant is incomplete without its background, the armed hordes of Chaka and Moselekatse, of Soshangane and Mantatisi, of Thulare and Mafefe, laying waste and massacring, and in the wake of the trail of desolation, the smaller tribes and those miserable remnants, the guerrilla bands of cannibals, completing the destruction. They all are mightier than Mujaji, who is unarmed yet invincible. And, as the pageant passes by, we see innumerable refugees flocking from all points of the compass to seek sanctuary in the inviolable land.

The Eighth Pageant (1894). The sceptre, secretly entrusted to Mujaji II on her accession forty years and more before this pageant passes, is

[1] A Zulu author, M. J. Mpanza, in his *UGuqobadele* (1930), p. 53, confirms this. He says that if there was excessive drought, the Zulu king would send black cattle to the Swazi king with a request for rain; and, if there was still no rain, he would send to Mujaji.

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the symbol of forces that swayed a bygone world. People are uncertain of their bearings in the new world, their sense of security has been shaken. The black ants from Swaziland have left a scar, though they were chastened when the legions of Ludongo were defeated. Now the red ants are brought upon the scene as the aftermath of the exploits of Albasini, self-appointed chief of the Magwamba (Shangana-Tonga) and Native Commissioner of the Boer Republic. The sceptre only weakly shows the force of spiritual power. The tribute Mujaji sends to Albasini, it is true, smites him with drought; upon General Joubert, curious to behold the royal majesty, a far-off sister of the queen, who was also her 'wife', is palmed off as the mysterious 'She-who-must-be-obeyed'; the Transformer of the Clouds still is the 'huckster in her hut'.

But to the workers and warriors of the 'red ants', the sceptre is like a broken reed rather than a magic wand. Some of them with impunity appropriate the country, enlisting in their service the denizens of the soil; others are collecting taxes, exacting tribute and redrawing age-old boundary lines; still others invade the sacred places, even desecrating the drums at Maulwi. The princes still come, but they supplicate surreptitiously.

The temporary triumphs cannot offset the disastrous defeats, and Mujaji, bewildered by the turn of events, does not know how to adjust her weapons and her diplomacy to the needs of the new situation. She circumvents the curiosity of Joubert, but she fails to save her subjects from serfdom. When the grave of Khashani, the Christian kinsman whom she martyred, becomes the rallying point of a disloyal creed, when the conspiracy to expel the European intruder ends in the disaster of the deportation of her neighbours, she loses her faith in the gods of her ancestors and adjures her followers to trust the apostle of a creed that was uprooting these gods. Pathetically she presses the poison cup to her lips, conforming to the letter, not to the spirit, of the ritual end ordained by her ancestors. In a world indifferent to the eternal verities, that cup is like an empty sham and that end like a vain sacrifice.

The pageant passes on. A cheerless panorama unfolds before us as Mujaji III ascends the throne. To submission is added humiliation. When the white man, coming to arrange for the recognition of the new queen, sees old Mathogani, who had impersonated Mujaji II, the proceedings are stopped. The Lovedu are made to pay for their presumption by being denied a ruler until the old woman dies. They retaliate by dubbing her the 'Chief of the white men' and by accelerating her end.

But it is a fruitless revenge. They are faced with the problem of reconciling the claims of two incongruous worlds: is the authority of the queen to be derived from the alien conqueror and his ceremonies or from the spirit of the deceased and the rite of the door? The reality of the old rite is the sham of the new order; it is a mere coincidence upon which no title can be based. But also in all spheres of culture and of life these dualistic forces clash with one another; they are in a death grapple which lasts throughout the reign of Mujaji III.

The conflict is epitomized in the conflict between Shalala and the royal house. The commoner, using the weapons of the European lawyer,

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173 613 ranges himself against royalty, who invoke the powers of their ancestors When Magɔma, daughter of the queen, illicitly allies herself to the commoner and anarchy threatens disruption of the tribe, the royal house reluctantly invites intervention of the white man, submitting, however, only the superficial issues. Ostensibly Shalala suffers defeat, but in reality the struggle continues; and in this conflict, as in the wider conflict of the warring worlds, we are left in doubt where the victory lies.

FROM THE PAGEANTS TO THE PEOPLE

173 Only a few of the great figures of the royal family paraded before us in these pageants. We must regard them as expressions of some of the themes which the outlook of the society has emphasized. The twice-invoked incest theme is brought into relation with revolutionary national changes, like a transition rite in the life of an individual. Incest precedes and validates first the birth of the tribe, then the accession of a woman and her elevation to a mystical pedestal. Is it a case of the greater the sin the greater the saint, of the polluted and the sacred converging at infinity? We cannot say for certain. We saw the Lovedu pictured as a Prospero teaching the Calibans of Khiɔga. But primitive and unorganized though these Khiɔga were, they undoubtedly knew fire, and the use of fire against a fireless foe who has become a friend is unnecessarily treacherous, though it is, for the end in view, dramatically and, we may suppose, ritually effective. When internal dissension arises, the conflict is posed as one between the chief son and the 'chosen' son. The victory of the 'chosen' son vindicates the divine right of the rain-priest against mere legal precedence. This theme is once more dramatically thrown into relief by the device of naming the chief son 'the Filler' and the 'chosen' son 'the Drainer of the Rivers'. The contrasts are handled with consummate skill. Notice also the psychological insight that marks the manner in which we are led up to the climax of the change from kings to queens. The Outcast thwarted in his youth is over-sensitive and suspicious; he seeks compensation in revenge; and he is the paranoic who utters the fatal prophecy. The prophecy is not merely a vain delusion; it has a purpose and was put into the mouth of the Outcast after the event; and as such it is a magnificent piece of stagecraft. Yet it is not considered to be equal to the task of sufficiently magnifying the mysticism of Mujaji I; that task is finally achieved by a repetition of the incest theme. Those were dangerous times; drastic handling of their dramatic moments was called for. The culminating point of Mujaji's power stands out prominently amid the surrounding turmoil. It also challenges it. The drama suddenly ends; it has run its course. In the sequel, the problem of the death-grapple of dualistic worlds has developed too suddenly, too disturbingly, for the powers of the tribal historian.

These are some of the conceptions handled in the pageants. They reflect ultimate values, the philosophy of the society. They are on a different plane from the ordinary lives and interests of the people. To re-orientate ourselves, we must bear in mind three things: firstly, the royal pageants are but one of a large series, for besides the nuclear ruling

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group there are many other groups, each with its own historical background, subtly linked up though it be with the royal background; secondly, great as the glory of the queens is, we must not fail to see their people in their true perspective against the masses of foreign tribes and against the stature of the European Colossus; and, thirdly, however greatly men rely for their sense of security upon ultimate values, their lives are immediately and predominantly concerned with very simple matters, with tilling the soil and caring for their cattle, with getting and preparing food, with securing shelter and warmth, with gossip at beer drinks and with petty domestic squabbles.

The Lovedu to-day are predominant in an area of some 5,000 square miles, the area of the Lovedu lowveld which is bounded by the Game Reserve, the escarpment, the Klein Letaba and the Olifants Rivers. On all sides of this area there are mightier peoples. Shangana-Ṭonga to the east. Pedi to the south, Venda to the north and several highveld tribes to the west—all these overshadow the people of Mujaji in numbers, in organization, and in power. But within the Lovedu lowveld, if we count all branches of the Lovedu, the subjects under them (about 50,000) outnumber the rest of the Sotho-speaking tribes put together (some 40,000). There are in addition many people (perhaps 25,000) under Shangana-Tonga chiefs, and in the eyes of the European one of them has far greater stature than Mujaji.

The Lovedu live in a location marked out in the early 1890's, immediately after the advent of European settlers and the conflicts that resulted. The original location, just short of seventy square miles, was enlarged during the 1930's by the purchase of tribal farms, and now the whole reserve is about 150 square miles in extent. This falls far short of the 600 square miles within which Mujaji used to exercise effective jurisdiction. She held the area between the Moketsi, the Great Letaba and the Mulodozi Rivers, from where the latter joins the Great Letaba at its northernmost bend, and from there westwards to the Moketsi; beyond it for another 400 square miles, but rather indefinitely towards the north, north-east, and east, where the population was sparse, Mujaji's writ ran, through uncertainly and spasmodically.

The population of the reserve we estimate at 33,000, which is considerably in excess of the official census figure for 1936.[1] The average

[1] Official census figures for 1936 are available, not for the Lovedu reserve, but only for two separate units of areas: (*a*) the Lovedu location and (*b*) an area to the north of it, about half of which falls within the Lovedu reserve. For (*a*) the figures are 11,636 and for (*b*) 7,205. If we assume that half of the population of (*b*) falls within the Lovedu reserve, its total population would be 15,238, or only about 46 per cent of our estimate of 33,000. We arrive at our figure from three sources: (1) Kraal-to-kraal countings in three sample districts with a total area of 14·5 square miles and a total population of 3,500. These districts represent different localities, some valley, some hill, and constitute a fair sample. On the basis of the average density of population in them, the total figure for the Lovedu reserve of 150 square miles should be $150 \div 14{\cdot}5 \times 3{,}500$, or 36,207. (2) The proportion of people who, according to Native accounts, our own impressions, and independent European eye-witnesses, escaped official enumeration. Despite instructions that the people of each district should collect in their respective districts, the enumerators, finding the districts inaccessible by road

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entering from the first quarter of the eighteenth century until to-day, and are all segments of other tribes, themselves composed of very diverse elements. To-day the task of unravelling the confusion and complexity is beyond the wit of man. It is a complexity which everywhere antedates the nineteenth-century disturbances, probably even the movements and unrest recorded by the Portuguese for the sixteenth century. Not all the groups are equally closely linked with the royal nucleus. The most alien are the Shangana-Tonga. This is because intermarriage with them is frowned upon and because, in the incorporation of a foreign group into the tribe, the most effective instrument is the alignments effected by the bride-price of the marriage system. The process of incorporation is dealt with elsewhere. It depends upon the obligation of the immigrant group to send one of its daughters as a wife to the queen. These are handed out to nobles of the nuclear group and thereby the whole complicated machinery of intermarrying lineages is set into motion. Thus, through the links created by giving brides and in return receiving cattle, loyalties are built up in the foreign groups and they become closely knit into the texture of the tribe and of its social structure, the centre of which from this point of view is the nuclear ruling group.

We have to remember, in considering the pageants of the past, that each of the constituent groups also has a background of history. There are scores of subsidiary pageants, some almost as impressive as the royal pageant. Neither the historical background nor all that it implies as to the meaning of the present culture can be properly interpreted without taking into account the subsidiary pageants. Some of them are almost self-contained side-shows, some have become submerged in the main pageant; but all have contributed something to the total culture of the Lovedu. It is always instructive to observe what the contribution has been and how it has been reshaped to harmonize with the predominant conceptions in the society. The selection of traits that are congenial, the rejection of elements that do not fit, the manner in which the assimilation has altered the details as well as the meaning of borrowed institutions, all throw light upon the values and working of the society. But in this book we are concerned only with the final result; and for that reason also we have omitted the histories and pageants of the constituent groups.

So far we have referred to the background of the royal group and to the great diversity of peoples that make up the Lovedu. It is time that, instead of viewing the tribe in broad perspective, we should turn to the ordinary mundane activities of the people. They do not live by the spirit of the past alone, and we cannot remain on the hilltops looking at them from afar. We must descend into their villages, attend their beer drinks, take a hand in the stamping and cooking, listen to the scandal at beer drinks and join them in their recreation. The contrast between the rarefied atmosphere of their philosophical contemplation, as it emerges in the pageants, and their everyday avocations, as we shall see them when we move in their midst, is very great. But so is the contrast between our philosophy and our everyday life.

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643 Sofala had formerly to take poison when disaster or a natural defect fell
171 upon them. Among the Lovedu, tradition decrees that the queen shall have no physical defect and must poison herself, not when she is old, but at the end of the fourth initiation (*vudiga*) of her reign. The emergence of physical imperfections and the holding of the fourth *vudiga* cannot both determine the date of suicide. In fact, no reign has been cut short because of bodily defects, though the conception of the relation survives. The queen is believed to be immune from disease and it is thought that her first will be her last illness; it is even said that Mujaji III's elder uterine brother was excluded from the throne because of his weak ankles. At the same time, not kings, but queens are wanted, there are no tests of physical fitness as are recorded for tribes in the north, and in the legends
[173] of the Lovedu and of tribes which, following the Lovedu, have ritual suicide, physical defects do not figure as a theme. In this complex, heirs to the throne have been disqualified or chiefs have been deposed because of inability to make rain, disobedience to their sovereign, or adultery with his wives. Among the Mamaila, a branch of the Lovedu, one chief is said to have become a cripple because he forced open the door which magically yields to the touch of the true heir, and the Nemesis that overtook him is attributed to his sin, not to his defect. Impotence disqualifies in the north, but Mujaji II was barren and, in the pattern as adopted in some tribes, such as the Khaha of Maake, barrenness of the queen is expected; for, as the queen may have no official husband, it is a virtue to have no children. That conception is not accepted by the Lovedu, for Mujaji II's barrenness was a source of sadness and strife and every effort was made to cure her. Physical fitness is an aspect of the perfection and divinity of the queen, but it has no practical relation to the right of succession.

643 The relation between the length of a reign and the initiations is far
778 more obscure. In many tribes where ritual suicide is enjoined (Thavina,
171 Khaha, Lirwa), the number of 'schools' is said to be seven. The 'schools'
177 are there held more frequently, and possibly there is some connexion with the number of sacred drums (*digɔma*), for the Khaha have seven and the Lovedu four. The chief's life, as we have seen, is intimately bound up with the drums; both drums and 'schools' are great *dogɔma*, objects or activities in which power is concentrated. Power is also concentrated in *dithugula*, a category of objects chiefly associated with the gods. The distinction is not that between magic and religion; the *digɔma* and *dithugula* appear to belong to different cultural complexes. The one was characterized, we may suppose, by 'schools', drums, and cults linked up with national calendric observances, dramatization of the crises in life, and the sanctity and power of the chief; the other, by sacred beads, shrines, reincarnation of ancestors in dedicated animals, and ritual suicide of the chief. In the process of merging, the great *digɔma* were, we suggest, grafted on to the royal institutions and brought into relation with the life as well as the death of the chief. This is little more than speculation, for it is difficult to isolate the oldest cultural substrata and their distinctive patterns.

000 The rule about physical fitness is now merely an ideal and, similarly,

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643 578 After the fire rite there follows the rite of opening the door, which will determine the identity of the heir. No one knows for certain who will succeed. Some nobles, availing themselves of the interregnum, mobilize their supporters, and all come fully armed, for there is sure to be some display of hostility. Even in 1896, at the accession of Mujaji III, a son of a wife of Mujaji II and great councillor marched upon the capital supported by the Mahasha, but there was no strife, as Mujaji III's followers were prepared. The rival claimants, in the presence of the [342] assembled people, go one by one to the hut in which the queen died and which (like one of the queen's huts even to-day) has two doors. They approach the door one by one, address the spirit of the deceased, saying who they are, and lightly touch the door. It is arranged that the most ambitious claimants go first, and those who are indifferent as regards their prospects last, the true heir to whom the door will open taking his place between them.

The spirit of the deceased, by opening the door, chooses the successor. The new queen, taking the axe, spear, and shield of her royal predecessors, escapes by the other door. She may have to flee, if the party of a rival is too strong, but in time she will be formally presented by a great councillor to the people. There is doubt as to the fate of the person who held the door from within: some say he must die, others that he is given a wife and sent out of the country. There is much uncertainty and secrecy about what happened in 1896; it is even doubted whether the door was opened. The reason lay in the fear of European intervention, for just previously the Boer General had been deceived and the lowveld tribes conquered, as described in Chapter I. Cowed by disaster, the Lovedu wisely decided to emphasize, not their own ritual, but the formal confirmation of the accession by the European.

643 578 173 The opening of the door, as known among neighbouring tribes, serves chiefly to resolve conflicts between rivals to the throne. It sometimes co-exists with institutional predetermination of the heir—for instance, where he must be the chief son of a wife married with special ceremonies and with cattle contributed by the whole tribe, the issue of a house in which the tribesmen all have a stake. In such circumstances conflicts arise, and European authority throws its weight on the side of 'constitutional arrangements' rather than 'coincidence'. In some tribes the opening of the door serves to strengthen the claim of the institutional heir; that is the case where there is no great massing of institutions behind the chief heir and conflicts are liable to break out if there are several claimants of standing. Among the Lovedu, succession was quite uncertain, the personal choice of the chief, not primogeniture, being stressed. The great son seldom succeeded, it is said, because the second child was favoured; and that is one explanation of the origin of the Mamaila, Sekhɔpɔ, and Rakhwadu tribes, for the great son was driven out of the country. In traditional history the 'Filler of the Rivers', who was chief son and seized the throne, had to make way for the 'Drainer of the Rivers', who proved to be the choice of his father and to whom the rain secrets had been imparted. Khashani, the great son, was expelled by Mugɔdɔ, his younger brother (we do not know whether he was the second son), of whom it is

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said that his father treated him as an outcast in order to deceive the people. Khashani was, however, given ritual precedence and in this as well as in the fact that it was the line of Malegugu, great son of Mugɔdɔ, which provided the 'husbands' of the last two queens, we may see perhaps an attempt to compensate the great son and retain his allegiance. The pattern of antagonism to the true heir continued to be followed by the queens. Mugɔdɔ was outcast from the capital, Mujaji I was born in despised Lekhwareni, and Mujaji II and III were expelled from the country.

The choice of the heir among the kings is represented as exercised by them personally; he who must raise the heir to the queens is chosen by an inner, secret 'council' of relatives. We cannot describe its membership by saying that one is a sister, the other a brother, and so on; each is related to the chief in a dozen ways and their pre-eminence in the royal 'councils' derives from complicated inter-relationships, prestige, sagacity, and loyalty as well as institutionalized arrangements.

The accession of queens has raised new problems of succession. The heir apparent is theoretically prohibited from having children before she ascends, and, when she ascends, her powers of bearing children may be exhausted. This is a simple statement of a much more complicated situation, but suffice it to add that, ideally, should the queen or, if she is barren, her wife who is chosen to bear the heir, have male issue, the child has either to be killed or to be excluded by a mechanism with strong social or ritual sanctions—namely, the opening of the door. Mujaji I's son was killed, so it is said; but the uterine brother of Mujaji III was allowed to live and become a great councillor. Another problem is the exclusion from power of the 'husband' of the queen. Queens may not marry, but the physiological father of their children may be a councillor, as he was in the reign of Mujaji III, and it is essential that he should be a close relative. To support such arrangements in a patrilineal society is one of the functions of the 'opening of the door'. It also confirms choices made by the inner 'council', visibly and publicly demonstrates the will of the ancestors, enforces loyalty to all relatives of the royal house any one of whom may become chief, and unmistakably points out to whose hands the rain secrets have been entrusted.

The quarrels and conflicts leading to the flight of the heir are much stressed in tradition; they are nothing if not realistic, and one is often in doubt whether they are genuine or merely staged conflicts. Leakhali and her brother, together with Leakhali's daughter, Mujaji III, were genuinely expelled. Leakhali had her own village and her own wives and was proud and independent; she and her brother objected to the influence of a doctor who had come to cure Mujaji II of her barrenness, but stayed to be her lover. After a public insult to this doctor in the presence of the queen at a beer-party at Leakhali's village, the queen sent her wife the calabash and firebrand. Leakhali and her brother fled, and in exile Mujaji III was taught by her mother's brother, thus fulfilling, it is said, the law that the heir must be taught by her maternal uncle. The situation appears to be re-enacted to-day, with this difference, that it is the queen's own daughter who, after her lover's quarrel with a great councillor, fled